

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**



*Press Release  
(For immediate release: August 9, 2011)*

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**MENDOCINO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT  
ELECTS PRESIDING JUDGE AND  
ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE**

The Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino, is pleased to announce the election of a new Presiding Judge taking office January 1, 2012. Judge Richard J. Henderson has been elected by his judicial colleagues to serve as the new Presiding Judge. Judge David Nelson will serve as the new Assistant Presiding Judge. Both judges will serve two-year terms.

Judge Henderson will replace Judge Cindee F. Mayfield, who has served as Presiding Judge for three successive two year terms. "I'm sure I speak for the other judges," Henderson observed, "in recognizing and thanking Judge Mayfield for guiding the local court through some very difficult times with her very able and conscientious leadership." Judge Henderson will lead the Court's 9 judicial officers in the supervision of the Superior Court's activities within the two-branch court with its approximately 70 employees.

Judge Henderson was first elected in 2000 and is serving his second term on the Superior Court. His time on the bench has been equally divided between civil and criminal duties, including a one year assignment to the Willits Branch. He currently presides over the Criminal cases and has served as Assistant Presiding Judge since 2006. Henderson was raised in Ukiah. He served in the Army for three years, including a year in Vietnam. After graduating from the University of San Francisco Law School in 1974, he represented clients throughout Mendocino County for over 25 years, primarily in civil matters. He is married to Colleen Buxton Henderson; they have two children.

Assistant Presiding Judge-Elect David Nelson was appointed to the Superior Court bench in 2003. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Stanford University, and a JD degree from Yale Law School. Judge Nelson spent three years as a deputy public defender in Contra Costa County. He moved to Mendocino County in 1974 and opened

his own practice in Ukiah in 1975. Nelson was past president of the Mendocino County Bar Association and sat on the board of the First District Appellate Project. Judge Nelson has presided over Criminal cases and is currently assigned to hear Juvenile matters and serves on the Court's Executive Committee. He is married to Judith Fuente and they also have two grown children.